

VZCZCXRO7443  
RR RUEHDE RUEHDIR  
DE RUEHMS #0344 1281311  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
R 071311Z MAY 08  
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9558  
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0053  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0531  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0098

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000344

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/07/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MU](#)  
SUBJECT: SULTAN QABOOS BEGINS EXTENDED OVERSEAS VISIT

REF: A. MUSCAT 308 (NOTAL)  
[1](#)B. MUSCAT 253

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo for Reasons 1.4 (b, d)

[1](#)1. (U) All major Omani dailies on May 7 devoted colorful front page spreads to the start of the three-day official visit to Abu Dhabi by Sultan Qaboos, who departed Muscat the previous day. Accompanied by a delegation of seven ministers and other senior Omani officials, the Sultan was greeted at the Abu Dhabi airport by UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahyan and was also received by UAE Prime Minister, and ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum. The Oman News Agency reported that the Sultan would proceed from the UAE on a "special visit" to Sharm al-Sheikh where he will meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

[1](#)2. (C) Although no mention has yet been made in the Omani press of the Sultan's travels beyond Egypt, he will continue as planned to Europe on a private visit -- with official meetings in London and possibly elsewhere -- lasting more than two months (refs A, B). The Italian Embassy in Muscat told emboffs that it issued over 700 visas for the Sultan's entourage, including the crew of his new private yacht, which will use Italy as a base for cruising the Mediterranean Sea. (Note: The spectacular German-built ship left Oman on or about May 2 for the Italian peninsula. End Note.) The British Ambassador to Oman similarly shared that his embassy issued around 400 visas for the visit of the Sultan and his traveling party (with one visa each for both of the Sultan's two passports with differing last names) to the United Kingdom.  
GRAPPO